

Strawberries and Champagne

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Strawberries and Champagne

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Summary

The man looked him up and down, then stepped back to get a better look at the car. “For twenty bucks, I’ll take a peek under your hood,” he finally said, “And we’ll talk about the extras as they come along.”

“Look, I really -”

“I’m being serious. Literal. Both.” The young man held his hands up in placation, his smile still wide. “My dad owned a shop back in the day, I used to watch him fixing engines.”

A Pretty Woman AU... because of course.

Notes

We very vaguely follow film here, we cover the major good shit (opera, sugar daddy things, falling for your client, shitty people being shitty) but you genuinely don't need to have seen the film to read this. Strats still hasn't.

For Neph, because Neph is fucking awesome.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Chapter 1

Hannibal had not had a particularly good start to his day.

He hadn't wanted to come to the conference at all, but the expectation for him to be there had weighed on his conscious mind to the point where *not* going felt more difficult than just showing up for the weekend. Thankfully this time he was only going as a speaker, not a headliner.

But, having left his plans on the backburner made for some difficulties once he arrived in Los Angeles. Firstly, and most importantly, that there were apparently no cars left at all in the entire city to hire.

"I'm sorry, sir," the flustered girl at the counter had told him. "We have nothing with a driver available at all."

"Perhaps a car I could drive myself?"

"I - I'll just check, sir, one moment please."

A moment had become an hour, had become two, and Hannibal was close to returning to the airport terminal and catching a flight right back home by the end of it.

But, miraculously, a car was found, worthy of his title and privilege and Hannibal was handed the keys with much pomp and ceremony to a car that looked perfectly fine on the outside and that proved to be an absolute disaster on the road.

It stalled, it hopped, the air conditioning didn't work, and nor did the GPS, leaving Hannibal stranded in a huge city he desperately hated, unable to find where he needed to be.

Hannibal eventually parked, on a street that didn't feel too crowded now that it was dusk, and pressed his hands to his eyes. He had options. He did. He could call for a tow, ask for another place to get a car, take a cab. He could. But right then he was so tired he only wanted to get to his suite, drop his things and fall asleep.

"You look tense, baby. Blow you for a fifty?"

In his lifetime, Hannibal had often heard the phrase 'if looks could kill,' but he'd never before wished so vehemently for it to be as simple as that. He turned the force of his frustrated glare on the man who was now bending over, hands on the door to give Hannibal a brighter smile.

He was not a bad looking man, somewhere in his mid 20s, with blue eyes accentuated with make-up and a wild tangle of brown curls. The rest of him, denim shorts too short to be called 'clothing' and a tank top that rode up to show just a sliver of flat belly, left much to be desired. Although he was likely considerably less overheated than Hannibal was right this minute.

“Somehow, I doubt that would help me.”

The man raised an eyebrow. “For the right price, I can be a little dirtier.”

Hannibal’s lip curled. He had no idea how he’d ended up talking to a prostitute on some dingy street in LA, but it was making his head hurt. “How much for you to go away?”

The man looked him up and down, then stepped back to get a better look at the car. “For twenty bucks, I’ll take a peek under your hood,” he finally said, “And we’ll talk about the extras as they come along.”

“Look, I really -”

“I’m being serious. Literal. Both.” The young man held his hands up in placation, his smile still wide. “My dad owned a shop back in the day, I used to watch him fixing engines.”

“While I appreciate the offer -”

“You’d rather bake in there til a towing truck comes along? In LA?” he looked over his shoulder, as though there were one waiting just behind. “I’d give it a good two hours, at the least, at this time of day. And all the way out here. Biggest lie on earth is that shit takes 20 minutes to get anywhere in Los Angeles.”

Hannibal sighed, a low and long exhale, and finally gestured to the man to check if he was so inclined. He nearly jumped out of his seat when he came around to Hannibal’s side of the car and reached over him for something.

“Need to actually *open* it,” the stranger explained, amused. To his credit, he touched nothing else; not Hannibal, not Hannibal’s things. And had he been inclined to rob Hannibal then, this would have been the best opportunity. Hannibal watched him circle to the front of the car and set the hood up on its stand. A low whistle and blue eyes peeked around the side to meet Hannibal’s.

“Someone *really* ripped you off with this. Needs new sparks, oil’s dry as the fucking Sierra Nevada in winter.”

“That mountain range gets snow,” Hannibal pointed out softly. The blue eyes were back.

“Whatever. Dry as shit. It’ll get you to your place but after? I’d get this baby towed and rent something else. And sue the guys that gave you this one.”

He fiddled about a little more before taking down the stand and gently lowering the hood to close it once more. When he came around to the passenger window again with a grin. Hannibal blinked at him.

“Twenty bucks,” the man reminded him.

“I’ll give you the fifty if you get in and direct me to my hotel,” Hannibal found himself saying, “Plus cab fair to bring you back...” He paused, looking around at the street, growing less welcoming as the evening darkened. “To bring you wherever,” he amended.

The man stared at him for a long moment, then shrugged. “Easier money than any other I’d get tonight,” he said, coming around to slide into the passenger seat. “I’m Will, by the way. The others all know me by name, if you ever change your mind about what I can offer you.”

“Hannibal,” Hannibal replied uncomfortably.

Will, as it turned out, knew the area perhaps even better than a GPS would have. He also had plenty of advice when the car stalled out at a red light. Somehow, they made it back to the hotel in one piece. Will whistled at the sight of it. “Don’t valet it,” he advised, “Poor kid doesn’t get paid enough to put up with this kind of junk.”

“I’m not even sure they’d allow it in the parking lot,” Hannibal muttered. Somehow, Will managed to find him a place to park for the night, as well as the number for a tow company. Hannibal was so grateful that he pulled a hundred from his wallet, despite their previous agreement.

Will snorted. “Changed your mind about my first offer?”

“No, I just -”

“I could come up?” Will added gently. “Could hold your hand for a fifty instead.”

“Do I give off the impression that I need hand holding?” Hannibal asked mildly. Will just blinked at him, graciously choosing not to answer. “No, thank you. Your help has been invaluable with the car.” He offered the note again. Will just shook his head.

“Don’t make it a point to get something for nothing.”

“I don’t have anything smaller.”

Will snorted. “Of course you don’t. Come on, then. Fifty bucks will buy you half an hour of my endlessly charming company doing nothing at all, and then we’re square. We can talk about extras as they come along.”

Hannibal was too tired to argue. Too tired for anything at all, really, and now that he was at the hotel the worst that could happen was he would need to call security to escort Will off the premises. He didn’t seem like the kind of man to kick up a fuss, so perhaps even that wouldn’t be necessary.

When Hannibal went to check in, Will followed him, scuffing his boots on the floor and leaning far too deeply over the counter to see what was behind it. He seemed to have no inhibitions about his body, not even here where it was so clear how out of place he was. And he smelled clean, which had surprised Hannibal from the moment Will had gotten into his car.

They took the lift to the penthouse, and Will whistled loudly when Hannibal opened the door to let them both in.

“Fuck *me* what a view.”

“Indeed,” Hannibal said, though he didn’t join Will’s journey to the windows. He busied himself with his things instead, hanging up suit jackets and crisp white shirts.

Will was inquisitive, though less about Hannibal’s things and more about the room itself. No doubt he’d never stayed somewhere quite so extravagant; he was particularly impressed by the French press.

“What does a guy do to afford a place like *this* ?”

“I’m a psychiatrist,” Hannibal said, amused by the flinch Will gave, “And there was also a good bit of inheritance left to me. I can afford to be comfortable.”

Comfortable , Will mouthed, looking again towards the window. His next bit of wandering took him past the bed; he trailed a hand over the duvet with a small smile.

By the time he’d circled the whole room, Hannibal was done with his things, and eyeing the man warily. Will came close enough to look up at him, tilting his head back despite their scant difference in height. “You know,” he said softly, fingers trailing down the line of buttons on Hannibal’s shirt, “Everyone in the lobby knew what I was. They have an idea of the reasons I would be here. It’d be a shame to take the scrutiny and not at least have the fun that goes with it.”

Hannibal hummed a sound of mild displeasure and stepped back just out of reach of Will’s fingers. It wasn’t that he found the idea reprehensible; it was, after all, the oldest profession in the world. And Will was, at the very least, a fairly polite and clean representative of it for Los Angeles. But the most base and embarrassing fact of the matter was that he was truly and utterly exhausted. Even if there was a spark to drive *something* to happen, Hannibal couldn’t find the energy to summon it.

“You can order room service, if you wish. The least I can offer is dinner after your help today.”

Will snorted, dropped his head back with a deep and deliberate sigh. “Not into men?”

Hannibal’s denial came a hesitant second too late and Will nodded, bringing a hand up to tug his hair from his face before looking around the room for the telephone. He found it on one of the bedside tables and took a running leap to sprawl himself over the king-sized mattress.

“Should I order something to share?” He asked over his shoulder. Hannibal shook his head.

“No, thank you, I don’t have an appetite for anything right now. But please don’t restrict yourself on my account.”

Will didn’t. He ordered himself a steak with fries and coleslaw, chocolate mousse for dessert, and decided to keep it polite and went with a coke rather than a bottle of beer. When he hung up he rolled onto his back, mindful to keep his booted feet off the duvet as he watched Hannibal move about the space. He was very deliberately avoiding looking at Will, and Will found that as endearing as it was amusing. He brought one foot up, working the laces on his boot as he held it overhead, and kicked it off before doing the same with the other.

“What brings you to LA?” he asked, crossing his legs and sitting on the bed more comfortably. Hannibal gave him a cursory glance.

“A conference.” He answered, before reconsidering and adding, “a fairly pompous affair I was too late to refuse an invitation to. My own fault, really.”

“Psych conferences,” Will drawled, “A whole room full of people picking each other apart.”

“I’m afraid it gets worse,” Hannibal told him, “I’m expected to give a presentation.”

Will snickered, leaning back into the pillows. “Don’t worry. You’ll fit right in with all the other pompous shrinks.”

Hannibal looked unimpressed. Will shot him his most charming smile, which only lessened the expression slightly.

“Are you always so bold with customers?”

“You’re not a customer,” Will reminded him, “Not yet, anyway. You’re just someone unlucky enough to enjoy my company for a few hours.”

“And paying for the privilege.”

Will laughed, delighted, and nodded. Some tension eased from Hannibal’s shoulders, though, and Will found himself relaxing in kind. He didn’t feel pressured to do anything, and he was well aware that he would most likely be asked politely to leave once he’d eaten.

Dinner usually took a lot more work, so Will was hardly complaining. The silence between them wasn’t uncomfortable, and when someone knocked on the door with Will’s dinner, Will was off the bed like a shot to get it before Hannibal did.

“Hi,” he grinned, amused by the double take the poor staff member did before wheeling in a trolley - a goddamn trolley - with a covered plate on top and a chilled bottle of champagne in a bucket of ice on the bottom. There was also a huge bowl of strawberries that Will didn’t remember ordering. “Thanks so much.”

“Good evening, Dr. Lecter. Your guest. Enjoy.”

“Thank you,” Hannibal replied, coming to stand by Will as the door was closed again.

“I didn’t order some of this,” Will told him honestly, “I’m not that presumptuous.”

“It’s a standing order,” Hannibal explained. “Strawberries help bring out the flavor of the champagne.”

Will set a hand to his hip and tilted his head. “Well you learn something new every day. You want to join me with your liquid dinner on the balcony?”

“No, thank you.”

“On the bed, then?” Will pushed gently, smiling when Hannibal gave him a slightly panicked look. “You’re a guy who’s scared of heights who rents the penthouse. The bed must be the safest place you feel in here.”

“I’m not afraid of heights,” Hannibal said stiffly, “I get vertigo.”

Will raised an eyebrow and gestured towards the bed. “Right, well, me and the champagne are going to have a lovely evening together on the bed. Feel free to join us.”

He was a presumptuous, observant little thing. Hannibal found it entirely refreshing, despite his exhaustion. Before he could think too hard on the decision, he made himself settle onto the bed. Will gave him another sunny smile and handed him a glass of champagne.

Engines were not the only things Will knew well, as it happened. He had more than a passing knowledge of psychology, and was more intrigued by the subject of Hannibal’s talk than Hannibal had expected. He had a few opinions on social exclusion himself, and could back them up, which was more than Hannibal could say for some of his colleagues.

“How does a man like you end up in the world’s oldest profession?” Hannibal asked. Will shrugged.

“How does anyone? I needed the money.”

There wasn’t any tension there, either. Will may not have been an enthusiastic participant in the business but he wasn’t disgusted with himself. If anything, he was resigned. He’d finished his dinner and popped another strawberry in his mouth as he shrugged again.

“School didn’t work out, ended up in over my head with debt and no way to pay it off. Worked with cars for a bit, but unless you’re willing to ‘clean’ cars for gangs here you’re shit out of luck. This was the only other thing I was good at.” Hannibal hummed again and Will narrowed his eyes at him. “What? Going to tell me I’m worth so much more than a fifty?”

“Yes,” Hannibal replied, honest, and Will laughed.

“Appreciated. But that’s the going rate out here. Fifty for a blow or a hand job, hundred for a fuck. Anything else is extra.”

“How much for a night?”

Will blinked at him, tilted his head curiously and drew a knee up to rest his cheek against. “A night of what?”

“Company.”

Will licked his lips. “This kind of company, or my kind of company?”

“This kind.”

“Five hundred.” Will immediately told him, no hesitation, and Hannibal ducked his head with a smile.

“Very well.”

Will sat up, eyes wide. “You’re serious? I mean, I’d never turn down the money, but you’re sure you don’t want... anything else?”

“What I would like very much is to sleep,” Hannibal said honestly, “and perhaps to tempt you into more conversation over breakfast.”

“Breakfast costs extra,” Will said immediately, “that’s a joke, by the way.” For five hundred, a soft bed, and two free meals, he’d eat table scraps from this man’s damn fingers.

“Six hundred, then,” Hannibal said, without batting an eye. Will stared at him. He wasn’t sure he remembered how to breathe.

“This isn’t one of those mystery novels where I’m the dismembered body under the bed, is it?” He asked warily. Hannibal cracked a smile.

“Of course not. It would be wasteful to leave so much behind.”

He said it with such a straight face that Will couldn’t help but laugh, smothering his sniggers in his hand. “Alright,” he said when he could breathe again, “Alright. Bed and breakfast.”

Despite Hannibal’s constant denial of his advances, Will was still surprised to be shown to the guest bedroom. He was not as surprised as he should have been that Hannibal had booked a suite with a guest bedroom for just himself. Rich people were all oddly extravagant when it came to their expensive comforts.

He took off everything but his boxers and climbed into bed. If he were honest, he was tired too. Will worked the streets late afternoon usually through til early-early morning and it was exhausting. The heat alone was punishment enough. So being able to sleep in an air conditioned room, in a clean and warm bed, after a hearty meal and good company? *And* to get paid for it?

Will was living the dream.

At least for a night.

Come morning, Will still felt like he’d woken in an alternate universe. He snuck into the bathroom after Hannibal was done with it, used his toothpaste to at least attempt to brush his teeth with his finger, and worked damp hands through his curls to give them a semblance of order.

He dressed in the same clothes he’d come in, because it was either that or showing up in boxers when Hannibal was already in a three-piece.

“Morning,” Will said, affecting a smile as he joined Hannibal at the table. Breakfast had already been ordered up; apparently Hannibal had gone for the works. Everything from pancakes to bacon to sunny side up eggs. A whole basket of fruit, a whole plate of meats and sliced vegetables.

Coffee.

Good fucking coffee.

“Good morning, Will. I trust you slept well.”

“Beyond,” Will assured him with a smile, reaching to fill his plate. “Did you manage any shuteye?”

“Some.” Hannibal folded the paper he’d been hiding behind and rested his hands on the table before him, fingers slotted together. “I have a proposition for you, Will.”

Will snorted, licking the side of his thumb clean where it had caught some egg yolk. “Oh?”

“I was wondering if you would allow me to enjoy your company all weekend, while I’m here. There is the conference itself on Sunday, and some events that are mandatory attendance that would be much easier borne with someone with a sense of humor.”

Will didn’t knock his coffee over, but it was a very near miss. He swallowed a mouthful of egg without tasting it and stared down at his plate. “I don’t know that I’m the kind of person who one takes to conferences.”

“I think you could be,” Hannibal insisted, “But more than that, I think you’re likely to be far more interesting than the kind of people one takes to conferences.”

“You’re all pretty boring,” Will agreed. Rude humor was probably not his best defense mechanism, but it didn’t seem to scare Hannibal off. He smiled instead, as if Will was the most fascinating person he’d ever talked to.

“Insufferably so,” Hannibal told him, “I won’t survive the weekend alone.”

“And if I agree to this...” Will said slowly, chancing another glance at Hannibal.

“I was thinking five thousand,” Hannibal told him, “and we will handle the extras as they come up.”

"Jesus Christ."

Five grand. *Five grand* . And Hannibal hadn't mentioned wanting to sleep with him at all. Will had never had that kind of money in one go. Just more than that in debts.

"I'm -"

"Tell me."

"I don't have anything to wear," Will laughed, gesturing unnecessarily to himself. Hannibal smiled at him fondly.

"I believe that would fall under extras."

Will took a deliberately long drink of his coffee. "Okay. So. You would like to pay me five thousand dollars to spend the weekend making fun of rich people with you. And you want to buy me clothes."

"Yes."

Will bit his lip. "This feels too good to be true "

"Why?" Hannibal asked him. And the question was genuine. Will took his time to answer, and tried his best not to be snarky.

"When you picked me up yesterday, I offered you fifty bucks to blow you. I'm not exactly *worth* five grand."

"You've been nothing but upfront about your intentions," Hannibal agreed. "I would never presume to consider something you take for a service to be your worth, Will. Merely compensation for services rendered."

Will snorted. For a moment he chewed his lip and then sat up a bit straighter. "Alright. All weekend, from now until Sunday evening. Five grand."

"And clothes."

"And clothes," Will ceded, amused. "But I have one rule."

Hannibal waited.

"I don't kiss on the mouth."

The doctor took up his glass of juice as though in a toast. "Neither do I."

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

It wasn't that he'd never dressed nicely. He had. But never this nice. He'd never been 'comfortable' enough - to use Hannibal's words - to be able to afford a button down off the rack for \$450. He'd never had anything tailored. He'd never needed to.

The shopping chapter XD

“The first thing we need,” Hannibal had told him, “Is to get you some new clothes.”

Then his phone had rung. He had a short, terse conversation with the person on the other side, and was irritable when he hung up.

“It seems shopping is destined to be a solo adventure,” he'd said, sliding a black credit card across the table to Will. Will had been afraid to touch it, which Hannibal had apparently found endearing.

“Whatever you spend won't be deducted from your pay,” Hannibal had promised, “Let's say... two thousand for your budget? At least one actual suit, please, tailored and not rented. Other than that, the choice is yours, so long as you dress nicely.”

Will had gaped at him.

Now, he was standing on a street he never bothered with, in yesterday's clothes, staring with wide eyes at mannequins dressed in tight fitting pants and a variety of iron-crisp button-downs.

“Fuck,” Will told himself softly. It wasn't that he'd never dressed nicely. He had. But never this nice. He'd never been 'comfortable' enough - to use Hannibal's words - to be able to afford a button down off the rack for \$450. He'd never had anything tailored. He'd never needed to.

And now Hannibal was giving him free fucking reign with his black AMEX and Will didn't know what to do with himself. He kicked the curb nervously for a moment more before setting out, turning into the first store he saw and just... looking.

He was immediately accosted by two salespeople, a young lady and a young man, who didn't ask him if they could help so much as very pointedly stalked him around the store to make sure he didn't steal anything. If the atmosphere had been hostile before, now Will could barely breathe in there. He left without trying anything on.

The next shop was much the same, as was the third.

Will knew that he shouldn't be upset; LA was far from welcoming of people who dressed like him, especially in this neighbourhood, but he had to admit that it did grate on his nerves a little. For the first time, when he had the means, no one would give him the opportunity.

Hannibal had an event this coming evening, his talk the next day. Will couldn't afford, in any sense of the word, to come back empty-handed.

At the fourth shop, he was explicitly told by the owner that he would report him to the cops for prostitution if he didn't leave his customers alone. Will went back empty handed.

"We can order things online, right?" He asked Hannibal, flopping dramatically onto the bed, "They have fancy immediate shipping now."

Hannibal looked up from the tablet he'd been browsing, a look of concern on his face. "Not if we want to be seen in public," he said, "What happened to your shopping trip? There shouldn't have been a problem with the card."

"It wasn't the card," Will said, sighing and rolling onto his back, "It was me. I nearly got arrested for things I didn't do." This time, anyway.

There was a moment of silence. Will closed his eyes and waited for the fallout, for Hannibal to decide Will was too much trouble to bother with.

"Explain, please," Hannibal said, slowly and quietly.

"At least five people pointedly tailed me through shops today, waiting for me to shove clothes... I have no idea where they thought I was going to hide them, but *somewhere* ." Will pushed a hand through his hair, tugging hard at the tangled strands. He should have gotten a haircut weeks ago. "One guy called me a streetwalker, so that was fun."

Hannibal made a sound, still soft, and Will felt his cheeks heat. He'd been called something else, but that was hardly something to share in polite company. He turned when he saw Hannibal come to stand by the bed.

"Come, Will."

"Where?"

"To places worthy of your patronage."

Will sighed, forcing himself to hold back the comments that wanted to spill forth, about how shops like that were not anywhere Hannibal would set foot, that shops like that didn't carry anything more expensive than a tenner.

Instead he pushed up on his elbows. "I don't want to take you from your work."

"Nonsense," Hannibal took a seat beside him. "I've nothing to do but allow anxiety to chew at me about my talk tomorrow. I would be happy to accompany you."

Will's cheeks warmed and he ducked his head. "Might need help with the suit," he agreed. "I don't think I've ever owned one."

The cab took them to the same street Will had struggled on, but further along than Will managed. And this time, when they moved along the sidewalk, eyes clung to Hannibal, not Will. He followed in the slipstream and tried to keep his head down.

Once inside, he found himself the center of attention.

"Dr. Lecter! What a surprise. How may we be of service to you?"

"Mr. Burwell, always a pleasure. I have a young man here in need of a suit, and the accessories to go along with it."

"Of course."

Will looked up to see a man about Hannibal's age, who was looking him over not with the disgust that others had, but with curiosity. When he met Will's eyes he smiled with his entire face.

"A grey, I think. Blues to echo with the color of your eyes throughout. Perhaps in the lining or the pinstripe. Structured silhouette?"

"Fitted, please."

They said a few more things that went over Will's head, as he was measured thoroughly. Mr. Burwell had him in and out of jackets and pants faster than Will could keep up with.

"Normally we would have something stitched specifically for you," Hannibal explained, "But I'm afraid on such short notice we will have to settle for tailoring things that are already in stock."

Will's last suit had been purchased from a thrift store. It had smelled like moth balls. Tailoring things to his measurements already sounded like too much work, but as Mr. Burwell held up a variety of ties against Will's complexion, he and Hannibal discussed numbers that made him vaguely nauseous.

"You said my budget was two thousand," Will hissed the next time the tailor was out of earshot.

"That was on your own," Hannibal said simply, "It seemed wise to give you constraints to avoid overwhelming you."

"Oh, yes, I wasn't at all overwhelmed by *two thousand dollars* ." Will rolled his eyes and let Hannibal force him into another crisp white shirt.

"Good to hear," Hannibal said, "Then you surely won't be overwhelmed by our next stop."

"There's *more*?"

Hannibal smiled, and Will realized he was *mischievous* . He was having *fun* with this; and not at all at Will's expense. Will laughed and shook his head.

"Alright. Do your worst, doctor."

'More' turned out to be underthings. Things Will hadn't even thought of to spend his budget on. Underwear, undershirts. Socks. Sock *garters* .

"No," Will laughed.

"Oh, yes." Hannibal added them.

Then, cuff links, tie pins, hat pins. Something Will thought were handkerchiefs that ended up being pocket squares. Shoes. Several pairs of shoes. Will had no idea what he would do with all of these things once the weekend was over. He certainly couldn't wear this on the street...

"Hannibal," Will had been smiling for hours. His face hurt. "Perhaps a hair cut?"

Hannibal gave Will a very deliberate and playful once-over. "And a shave."

By the time the suit was finished for them to pick up, Will had more clothes in bags than he had in his entire house. He felt like a kid at Christmas. He felt giddy.

His grooming made him look younger, too, and Will walked with his chin up when they left the suit store, dressed entirely in new things. Now, eyes skated between Hannibal and himself, and Will found himself wanting to slip his arm through Hannibal's and lean in.

It was easy to forget, like this. Easy to pretend this was just his life. Will didn't even think he'd be sad when it ended, because it was such a magical moment in and of itself. He could hold on to this when he didn't have it anymore. He might be a *little* mournful when he had to sell some of his nice things, but that was the way of the world.

Will was drooping a little when they finally arrived back at the hotel. The heat usually didn't bother him, but it had been a long day. Hannibal helped him lay out his things so they didn't wrinkle and then shooed him towards the bathroom.

"We have some time still before we have to leave. You should have a bath."

"I can just take a shower," Will said as Hannibal began to fill the enormous tub. Hannibal hushed him and fetched a basket of complementary supplies from under the sink. Soon, the tub was full of bubbles and the whole bathroom smelled like fresh lavender. Will thought he might fall asleep.

"Why are you doing this?" Will grabbed for Hannibal's sleeve, stilling him on his way out the door.

Hannibal looked at him for a long moment. "I don't know," he finally said.

Gently, slowly, Will cupped Hannibal's jaw and leaned in, pressing a gentle kiss to his cheek. "Thank you."

With a soft sound, Hannibal turned his head, his nose tucked in Will's curls. He took a deep breath, his hands settling on Will's waist.

They both lost control.

Clothes weren't *ripped* off, as it were, they were far too expensive for Will to ruin them for sheer passion, but it was a close call. Hands tugged at his tie as he worked his own over Hannibal's buttons, laughing when another kiss was pressed to his temple.

Will supposed he could lie to himself that they weren't breaking their own set rule. They weren't kissing each other on the lips. Just... everywhere else. But despite the frantic *need* to touch, neither pushed the other where they worried they wouldn't want to go. In the end, Will was the braver, lifting his head with a smile.

"Take a bath with me," he said, "it's big enough for two."

Hannibal hesitated, but Will could feel it wasn't entirely to do with him. It wasn't that Hannibal was hesitant about Will, but about what the bath could lead to, where both of them could end up. Will, too, felt the brief moment of freefall into worry but silenced it. It was, in the end, a transactional arrangement. If Hannibal wanted to sleep with him, he was well within his rights, and Will would certainly not be averse.

"You need to relax too," Will encouraged softly, before stepping back and taking off the clothes Hannibal's hands hadn't yet gotten to. His belt, his suit pants. His socks with their stupid garters. Finally, his underwear, pushed down to his thighs before Will let them slip to the floor on their own. When he looked up, Hannibal's attention was entirely on him, and it didn't feel exploitative. It didn't feel dirty. It felt wonderful.

There were a thousand things Hannibal had done for him in the brief time they'd known each other, and only a handful of things Will knew for certain he was good at. He dropped to his knees, his hands cradling Hannibal's thighs as he looked up at him.

"Will," Hannibal murmured, swallowing, "you don't have to."

"I know."

Hannibal was thick and uncut, exactly the way Will preferred his men. He took his time, licking around the head until Hannibal's clenched hands finally unwound and landed gently in his hair, as if afraid to touch.

"You can show me what you like," Will assured him, "you won't hurt me." Closing his eyes, he let Hannibal slide properly into his mouth, working his way down to the base with short bobs of his head.

Hannibal's head dropped back with a sigh and he curled his fingers through Will's curls. In truth, he had not intended to ask Will for any of this. He hadn't wanted to bring Will to his knees for money. He hadn't wanted Will in his bed for money.

But when Will had gone down on his own, when he looked like he was genuinely enjoying this, Hannibal could not deny him.

Will moaned around him and Hannibal cursed breathlessly, scratching gently against his scalp.

“Can you take me deeper?”

He didn’t see Will’s smile, but he could feel the pride he took in taking Hannibal not only deeper, but all the way to the back of his throat. Will swallowed around him, moaned, and turned into the hands that caressed him. He loved this. He was good at this. And he adored that he could make Hannibal feel so good.

Will had turned sex into an art form, and he was proud of it. Hannibal’s hands caressed his cheek, stroked over his hair to cup the back of his skull. Hannibal’s thrusts were hesitant. Will had never had a john be so gentle with him before, so clearly afraid of hurting him.

The reason his job was so easy was that Will *loved* doing this. He loved making someone fall apart with just his mouth, loved having his throat fucked by an overeager lover. He whined in disappointment when Hannibal pulled him off, staring up at him.

“We should get into the tub,” Hannibal said, his voice trembling and thick with arousal. He pulled Will to his feet, guiding him into a tub that was more of a small pond, deep and wide enough for them both to soak together. When Hannibal joined him, he tugged Will to him, their chests pressed together, Will’s legs on either side of his own.

“I wanted this to be about you,” Will protested. Hannibal shook his head.

“I didn’t.”

Hannibal’s hands were unexpectedly gentle as they trailed up the insides of Will’s thighs, seeking out places that made him squirm and shift impatiently. The first stroke was tentative, experimental, but he quickly figured out the right pace to have Will biting back moans.

And then he didn’t bite them back anymore.

He set his hands to Hannibal’s chest and spread his thighs further for him to touch and tilted his head back, lip between his teeth. It wasn’t uncommon for Will’s clients to touch him, but few did it so worshipfully. Few did it with the intent of bringing Will actual pleasure. Usually it was cursory, to tug his cock a few times, to pinch his nipples.

Hannibal touched him everywhere but there.

He teased until Will whined and pressed their foreheads together, his nose against Hannibal’s in a nuzzle.

He let his own fingers slip down over Hannibal’s chest, wide and furred and warm against him. Down his stomach, catching teasingly at his navel. Lower, lower -

Will sat nearer, slipping his fingers with Hannibal's to stroke them both together. The sound Hannibal made echoed Will's and he smiled.

"Where am I accompanying you to this evening?" Will asked him softly, lips parting in sympathy with Hannibal's as their joint hands squeezed tighter, relaxed around them both.

"Don Giovanni," Hannibal answered, tilting his head up for Will to press soft warm kisses against him. "And a far from enviable dinner afterward."

"Boring?" Will asked him.

"Absolutely."

"Dull?"

"Inarguably."

Will laughed, pushing up higher on his knees to rock against Hannibal faster. "And you're bringing me."

"I fear I wouldn't survive the night otherwise."

A slight shift in position made Hannibal grit his teeth, drawing in a slow breath. He pressed his forehead to Will's shoulder, guiding Will's hips and hands until they were both trembling.

"You may not survive the night as it is," Will whispered. Hannibal laughed, breathy and soft.

Hannibal would feel nice inside Will. He would fill him up in just the right way, make him tremble, make him shake. He already did.

Hannibal came first, but the pulse and grind of his orgasm sent Will over the edge with him, muffling a moan into his own hand. They'd made a mess of the water and missed the point of the bath.

"Shower?" Will suggested, chuckling.

Hannibal laughed too, a gentle almost helpless thing, and for the moment just clung to Will against him. Will was slighter but far from weak. He possessed his body with enviable confidence and that made him all the more beautiful.

Hannibal held him and relived every tremble, every shiver he'd drawn from him. He played back every moan and whimper and found himself suddenly craving the taste of Will's lips, despite his own blithe promises of never needing that kind of connection.

It had always been easier for Hannibal to lie to himself than to others.

Slowly, with great reluctance, they pulled away from each other and got out of the tub, leaving it to drain as they stepped into the shower stall instead. There had been no question as to whether or not they would share it, no question as to whether or not either was able to - even for a moment - have their hands off the other's skin.

There was an extraordinary intimacy in bathing a lover. Just being able to care for their physical form in such a soft way. Hannibal washed Will's hair for him, encouraged him to lean back against Hannibal's chest as he did. He kissed Will's neck and shoulders, down to his collarbone. He smiled when Will returned the favour, strong fingers in his hair almost enough to put him to sleep.

He didn't want to go to the opera.

He didn't want to go to the dinner.

He wanted to carry Will to bed and spread his legs wide and pleasure him with his tongue until he sobbed and begged him for more.

But as they dried off and cast shy smiles at each other by proxy of their reflections in the enormous mirror, he said only: "We should head out in an hour, to give ourselves plenty of time to get our bearings."

Will couldn't hide his instinctive response, which was a disgusted face at the reminder of all the pretentious assholes he had to spend time with tonight, but he just nodded in response.

Hannibal claimed that, as a rush job, the suit wouldn't be very close to his proper measurements, only rough approximations and quick hems. He'd apologized for it. Three times.

As far as Will could tell, the suit fit perfectly. Tapered in at the waist, not too broad in the shoulders. He managed a careful reproduction of the last time he'd tied a tie, and it was only the tiniest bit crooked. Will didn't think he could dress like this every day, but for one night, it almost had a fairytale feeling to it.

Hannibal looked contemplative when he saw him. "Acceptable," he finally said, "But we'll have to have something made for you with the proper amount of attention given to it."

Will didn't remind Hannibal that they were only going to know each other for the weekend. Maybe it was part of the fantasy for him, and Will didn't mind indulging. Instead, he stood still and let Hannibal redo his tie with an exasperated smile.

When he turned Will to the mirror, Will blinked. The knot was nothing like the fumbled turn-over he'd used to do for job interviews or school graduation. This one looked like a goddamn braid, the subtle lines of the tie adding to the intricate look of it.

Will felt at once younger and older than he was; entirely inexperienced with the clothes he wore and the role he was about to have to play, but also wise enough, cynical enough, to know that this wouldn't last. It couldn't.

He swallowed the disappointment down. Neither had lied to the other going into this, neither made promises they couldn't keep.

"I feel like I'm dressed up to go to prom," Will admitted with a laugh, Hannibal rested a hand on his shoulder and squeezed gently.

“Did you dress similarly then?”

Will snorted. “God no. I think I borrowed dad’s jacket from his wedding and wore jeans beneath. Didn’t even get to dance.”

Hannibal clicked his tongue as though disappointed, but the amusement in his eyes mirrored Will’s own.

“I can’t promise dancing here, but I’m sure you’ll forgive me if we get by on people watching and conversation.”

“Just this once.” Will replied, cheeks flushing as Hannibal’s brow lifted just a little, just enough. Even if Will had wanted to go to the opera and dinner before, this would have been the moment that changed his mind. Now he just wanted to go even less.

The opera house was exactly what Will imagined it would be. Enormous, opulent, gold and red. Despite his cynicism, he did find it beautiful; the building held a sort of power that made Will want to speak in whispers, in case his voice carried in the space. He and Hannibal had arrived in the car Hannibal had found to replace the nightmare Will had met him in, and Will blushed when Hannibal guided his arm through his own as they walked into the lobby.

There would be no question that they were here together.

There would be - and were - many questions about who Will *was* .

Intermission was a social function all its own. People crowded Hannibal, and by extension, Will. Hannibal handled them all with grace.

“Will works with the public,” He said smoothly, “I met him and was instantly charmed.”

This was theoretically the truth, for some weird variation of ‘truth.’ There was a brief moment where Will was worried they’d be called out on it, that someone would recognize Will from his supposed “day job.”

No one did. Or if they did, they weren’t willing to own up to it. Nobody tried to pull the rug out from under Will. By the time he and Hannibal were settled back into their seats, he was practically vibrating with the thrill of having gotten away with something.

“You’re unusually quiet,” Hannibal murmured into his ear, “have they frightened you?”

“No one knows,” Will whispered back, giddy. “They might see me as your arm candy, but nothing worse than that.”

“They were instantly charmed,” Hannibal agreed, “fascinated by your mystery.” He pressed a kiss to Will’s temple and Will stifled a slightly hysterical giggle.

“I’ve never considered myself particularly mysterious,” Will replied quietly, shifting in his seat to press closer to Hannibal. They were in their own box, because of course they were,

and while Will could see people below, beyond their faces, people could see little of them where they sat.

Will slipped a hand over Hannibal's knee in a teasing little touch and set his chin to his shoulder.

"You should feel very honored," he murmured, amusement dancing in his eyes. "You've popped my opera cherry."

Hannibal chuckled, a low and pleased sound and watched the lights dim over the theatre. "And was it as good for you, as it was for me?"

Will had to stifle his giggle against Hannibal's shoulder this time. As the second act started, Will watched. He didn't understand any of the words, of course, he spoke no Italian, but Hannibal's running commentary helped him parse through what the actions on stage didn't convey.

He found his hand in Hannibal's lap again, and smiled when Hannibal twined their fingers together and held his hand. It was a nice fairytale, an easy one to fall into when sitting in a dark box in the opera with a handsome man, dressed in clothes so far out of Will's budget they felt unreal.

Will pressed his lips to Hannibal's ear.

"I'm going to seduce you, now," he told him. Hannibal's hum was answer enough, the way he squeezed Will's hand and drew his thumb over his knuckles was reassuring and welcome. Will grinned, and while Don Giovanni confronted his ghosts on stage, Will slipped to his knees and lost himself to Hannibal's smell and taste.

Will had done this in tighter spaces, in more ill-advised ones. He'd never had a backing track that sang quite so beautifully. He'd never had hands in his hair that held so reverently, trailing sweetly over his cheeks and jaw.

There was nothing Will loved more than to be on his knees. It was easier to work when you enjoyed your job.

They weren't all decent. Hannibal was the only client he hadn't forced into a condom. It was risky, stupid behavior for a man like Will, but he refused to taste latex when he could taste Hannibal instead.

The opera drowned out most things, but Will could hear his own breathing, the soft, near-silent gasps Hannibal made. Will took his time, drawing it out. He teased his tongue under the head, explored the tip with little kisses and licks. He wanted Hannibal desperate and writhing for him. He would be something Hannibal would never forget.

In truth, Will could have comfortably sat there the entire performance, Hannibal heavy on his tongue, and been content.

The thought shivered through him and he teased nails against the man's clothed thighs.

If...

If they were *together*, Will would wake him in the mornings this way.

If they were together, He'd crawl between Hannibal's legs in his study and distract him from his work.

If they were together.

If.

With a low hum Will took him deeper, coaxing Hannibal closer and closer to release. He wanted to taste him. Wanted to have Hannibal at the back of his tongue as he smiled at his society friends. Wanted them to never ever know that just half an hour before caviar and champagne, Hannibal had been coming down Will's throat.

With a teasing drag of teeth, Will groaned, slipping a hand between his own legs to keep his orgasm at bay as Hannibal took his pleasure of him. And when he was done, Will primly put the doctor back together.

It was a moment, just one, where Will sat up and reached to kiss him.

He bit his lip instead.

"The irony doesn't escape me," he whispered, leaning in as Hannibal held him close, still on his knees, "that this is the opera I taste you to. I'll definitely remember that aria with a certain twist if I hear it again."

"You are a menace," Hannibal said fondly. He tugged Will into his lap, nuzzling into his throat. He kissed over Will's pulse, soft enough to make Will shiver. "The show is nearly over."

"Then you shouldn't be starting things you can't finish."

"I find myself entirely disinterested in the ending," Hannibal told him, "or in the expected social performance that comes after."

What he was interested in was opening Will up, bit by bit, giving him as much as he could bear to take and then pushing him a little bit further. Had they more time, Hannibal might have bent him over the balcony and had him like that, with Will's eyes on the stage.

...it was perhaps better that they didn't have more time. Hannibal had never been arrested before.

"Up," he told Will, "we'll slip out before the masses spill into the lobby."

"I'm turning a respectable man into a truant," Will laughed quietly, catching Hannibal's fingers between his lips when he pressed them there. "Maybe by the end of the weekend I'll have you join me on the balcony."

Hannibal grinned back, leaning in to press his lips against his fingers as well, kissing Will by proxy of them; their lips didn't touch.

“I suppose, one can never say never.”

They were out of the box before the opera was even finished, holding hands like teenagers sneaking out to a party. Will couldn't stop grinning as the car peeled away, taking them back to the hotel.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

"I want you." Will told him, laughing as he said it, tugging Hannibal's lapels, tilting his head higher for him to nuzzle under Will's chin. "I want everything with you."

They were barely into the room when Hannibal pinned him to the door, lips against Will's throat and hands in his hair. Will groaned, spreading his legs for Hannibal to step between them, freeing his tie to hold Hannibal close and encouraging him to leave marks.

God he wanted to feel him everywhere. He wanted to feel everything.

"Hannibal..."

"Yes."

"I want you." Will told him, laughing as he said it, tugging Hannibal's lapels, tilting his head higher for him to nuzzle under Will's chin. "I want everything with you."

Hannibal wanted to give it to him. He was beautiful, intoxicating. He could fix engines and match Hannibal nearly pace for pace when it came to psychology. He was, overall, the *least* boring person Hannibal had spoken to in a very long time.

And Hannibal wanted to be inside of him, needed it, could barely breathe with how badly the idea shook him.

Will was a slight thing, tall but underfed. It was little trouble for Hannibal to get two hands under his thighs and hoist him up, to carry him to the bed and cover him completely.

"Too much clothing," Will protested. Hannibal yanked Will's shirt open and scattered buttons across the room, pleased by Will's breathless laughter.

"I'll replace it," he promised, and then, on a whim, "I'll buy you a dozen more."

Will bit his lip and nodded, because he couldn't bring himself to remind Hannibal that they had this evening and the next day together, and nothing else. He didn't want to remember either, so he clung to Hannibal and moaned as a large hand pressed against the bulge in his pants and teased him.

It felt good. It felt so goddamn good.

"I want you to fuck me," Will told him, voice low and needy as he fumbled with Hannibal's tie, with the buttons on his shirt. "I want to feel you for *days*, Hannibal, please -"

Hannibal *growled* , a deep and possessive sound that shivered through Will's very bones. He arched up, gasped when Hannibal pulled his pants and underwear off at once and tugged them down Will's legs. His shoes were removed, his clothes bunched and tossed to the floor as though they weren't worth thousands upon thousands of dollars.

Will wriggled free of his jacket and shirt, laughing when his tie remained around his throat like a leash, and going obediently when Hannibal grasped it to bring Will closer.

Their lips brushed, just a bare tickling thing, before Will turned to nuzzle him instead, heart hammering in his chest.

"Condoms," he whispered. "In my shorts, pockets -"

Hannibal was gone before he could finish, digging through Will's discarded clothes and returning triumphantly with the whole goddamn row, as well as some lubrication he'd pulled from his own suitcase.

"What the hell are you going to do with *four* condoms?" Will teased.

"Use them, I would think."

Hannibal's suit joined Will's on the floor. He crawled over him, wrapping his hand in the tie Will still wore and gently tugged.

Will let Hannibal guide him, following the motion until he was sprawled out on his stomach. Hannibal kissed a trail down his spine, biting over Will's tailbone in a move that was as startling as it was arousing.

"You're ridiculous," Will protested, stifling his laughter in a pillow.

"You seem to bring that out in me," Hannibal told him, and he sounded far from unhappy about it. It had been a long time since someone had made Hannibal feel relaxed. Someone who called him on his bullshit, who wasn't afraid to be rude or raise their voice. Someone who laughed when Hannibal said something funny, genuinely, and not in a way that suggested the louder they went the more he should like them.

It had been a while, and being with Will, now, felt like waking up from a long and groggy sleep.

He spread Will's legs and the younger man moaned, a deep and truly pleasurable sound as his cock twitched between his legs. If Hannibal had had any doubts, still, that perhaps Will was in this predicament out of necessity and got no pleasure from it, this would be enough to sway him.

But he had already felt Will's tongue against him, his throat around him, had seen the blush that lay under his eyes and over his nose every time he pleased Hannibal.

He was beautiful.

Hannibal would make sure he remembered that.

“Tell me what you like,” Hannibal coaxed softly, pressing teasing kisses against the insides of Will’s thighs, closer and closer to the curve of his ass.

It had been too long since anyone had asked Will that. Relationships seemed like too much of a hassle on top of everything else in his life.

“I like to be fucked,” He said, aiming for ‘sultry’ and ending up somewhere around ‘nervous’ instead. It felt weird to use the same lines on Hannibal that he did on clients. Wrong, almost. Like he was doing Hannibal a disservice. Will tried to turn towards him, reaching to cover his insecurity with touch. Hannibal pressed him back down with a warm hand over the base of his spine.

“I think that can be arranged.” Hannibal kissed and nipped his way across Will’s thighs, over the curve of his backside, trailing his fingers teasingly up his inner thighs until he found his entrance.

“That!” Will gasped, as two fingers rubbed over his hole, “I like that!”

Hannibal’s fingers pulled back, and returned slick and cool. Will hid a shaky breath in the pillow, stretching his thighs apart and forcing his body to relax.

Hannibal was gentle, taking his time to work Will slick and open, first with one finger, then the other, alternating them as Will grew more and more desperate for both of them at once. He chuckled when Will bent his knees, presented himself higher for Hannibal to more easily slip both fingers in. And when he did, Will moaned.

It didn’t take long for him to become impatient here, as well, when Hannibal deliberately avoided his prostate in his teasing. Will huffed a breath and nuzzled the pillow and bit his lip before offering a more deliberate suggestion.

“I like being fingered open as someone strokes my cock,” he managed, voice breaking halfway through as Hannibal chose that moment to curl his fingers. Will’s entire body shuddered in pleasure and he clung to the bed with white knuckled hands. When Hannibal reached to acquiesce to the rest of Will’s demand, the younger man whimpered.

“I like being told how good I feel,” he whispered, words pouring from him as Hannibal added a third finger and lazily stroked Will’s cock. “I like being made to cry out, I like feeling someone hold me down, I like it rough and fast, and slow and lazy, I like when you leave marks,”

You. Not others.

Will didn’t adjust the slip because he didn’t notice it, he was already lost to the coiling build of warmth at the base of his spine. He was already rocking his hips between Hannibal’s fingers and his slick palm, his own orgasm so close.

“Hannibal please -”

Hannibal pulled his hands away, rearing up to pin Will bodily to the bed. Will moaned, trembling as the head of Hannibal's cock caught against his slick hole. Hannibal pulled away long enough to slide a condom on, and then he was back, hauling Will's hips up and bracing a palm between his shoulderblades.

Will twisted his fingers in the sheets as Hannibal speared him open, spreading him wide enough to ache. Digging his toes in against the mattress, he did his best to push back into the thrusts.

"You want to be fucked?" Hannibal growled into his ear, "You want me to mark you up until it hurts? Until you cry for me?"

"Yes," Will moaned, "Yes, *please*."

Hannibal's nails left scratches on Will's hips as he fucked roughly into him. "Good," he said, hand sliding up from Will's back to his hair and gripping tight, "I want you to feel me every time you move."

"*God* yes," Will breathed, eyes at half-mast, body relaxing to accept Hannibal into it, willing and pliant and beautiful. The way Hannibal held him angled his cock just so, and Will did not hold back his sounds as Hannibal thrust into him, over and over, before slowing his pace, slipping seamlessly from roughness to tenderness and drawing a quivering sound from Will's throat.

"You were so beautiful tonight," Hannibal told him, words pressed intimate and warm against Will's ear. "Dressed and groomed and poised like a prince. You deserve nothing less, Will, in all your life."

Will whimpered, bit his lip and turned his head and couldn't help the smile when Hannibal kissed his cheek. He lay Will flat to the bed, and pressed his body atop, a slow rocking of their hips together the only movement between them.

"I relished being able to present you as my own," he continued, slipping a hand from Will's hair to grasp his fingers instead.

"Oh god..." Will whimpered, his cock twitching against the bedding with every word. He wanted Hannibal to feel possessive of him. He felt possessive of Hannibal.

Will's fingers clenched between Hannibal's own, trying in vain to cling just as tightly as Hannibal did. "Over," he whispered, "Hannibal, let me roll over."

"You wanted to be pinned," Hannibal told him, his next thrust little more than a teasing, slow grind against Will's prostate, drawing out another beautiful whine from Will's throat, "I've trapped you."

Those words provoked a full-body shudder, a sinful roll of Will's hips against the mattress. "Please, Hannibal, let me up," he begged.

Hannibal parted from him reluctantly, filling the space between his thighs once more when Will sprawled onto his back. It was different this way, and not just because of the angle. Their noses brushed in a shared intimacy that was nearly overwhelming. "I would keep you," Hannibal found himself saying, "If you would let me."

Will wrapped a leg around Hannibal's and an arm around his neck, dragging him into a wet, needy kiss.

He wanted to scream yes to the room, the hotel, the entire city of Los Angeles.

Yes, he wanted to be kept.

Yes, he wanted to be Hannibal's.

Yes, yes, yes.

Will whimpered when their lips parted, eyes wide when he sought Hannibal's as realization dawned that both had broken their own rule for each other. A moment, another, and Hannibal leaned in again and Will closed his eyes and kissed him.

This kiss carried with it promises Will didn't want made to him, and answers to them he didn't have. This kiss was intimate, it was gentle, it was opening Will up to the kinds of vulnerabilities he didn't want anyone else to see. He drew both his knees up around Hannibal and urged him closer, rocking with him as Hannibal pushed into and out of Will with a softness only lovers could share.

He relaxed his arms down Hannibal's back, tracing his spine, squeezing his ass to drive him in faster, a grin breaking their kiss as Hannibal did and Will dropped his head back with a warm laugh of pleasure.

It felt good, it felt so good, just for now, to pretend they could have this forever.

Pleasure built, shared between them both, pushed and pulled between bodies until it was an overwhelming force neither could withstand. Will *did* cry, just a little. A single, high sound, tears welling up in his eyes and then just as quickly slipping away.

Hannibal tucked his nose under Will's jaw and breathed him in, filling him with shaking breaths and shakier hands, holding him close as he found his completion in him.

They should have talked about it. Any words at all would have done. Instead, Hannibal tied off the condom, and Will wiped them both down with a warm, damp cloth. They fell together into the sheets, wrapped up around each other, pretending for a little bit longer.

Will slipped into Hannibal's arms, back to Hannibal's chest. Hannibal pressed his lips into the curls atop Will's head. They slept like that, exhausted and intertwined.

Hannibal dreamed of waking in Baltimore, the same curls tickling his nose. He dreamed of tugging Will close and turning him over to kiss him awake. He dreamed of lazy morning lovemaking. He dreamed of feeding Will breakfast in bed. He dreamed of a weekend that transcended senses of time and place.

He woke to Will lax in sleep against him, having turned in the night to press his cheek to Hannibal's chest instead.

He was lovely. He looked so young in sleep, so fragile. And Hannibal knew that he was neither of those things. Will was a man who knew his own mind, held his own opinions, was not afraid to stand up for them and debate his stance without fear.

He was challenging and brash. He was almost wild. He was far from a tame thing.

A line from a book tickled at the back of Hannibal's mind and he smiled, stroking gently through Will's hair as the other slept on. Perhaps he should let him. Perhaps he should let Will stay in his land of dreams a while longer. Perhaps he was dreaming of similar things Hannibal had woken from.

But as Hannibal touched him, Will began to stir awake.

Morning awareness trickled into Will bit by bit. Hannibal was a hazy presence in his mind, more sensation than sight. He tilted his head into Hannibal's hand with a soft sigh.

"Good morning," Hannibal said softly. Will repeated the greeting, hesitant.

"We should talk," he told Hannibal, his eyes avoidant.

"We should," Hannibal agreed.

Neither spoke.

There was still time. Still Hannibal's talk to get through, still a day to enjoy each other. Will reached up to cup Hannibal's jaw in his hands, and then they were kissing again.

Will was still raw from the night before, but he welcomed Hannibal into him just as greedily as he had then. Hannibal rolled onto his back, Will perched atop his hips.

"At your pace," he murmured. Will closed his eyes on another sigh, head tilted back as he lowered himself, inch by inch.

This was better than talking, this strange, overwhelming intimacy. Hannibal's hands were warm and secure on Will's hips, guiding him through gentle rocking motions as their bodies worked together. Will wanted Hannibal to overwhelm him, to fill all his senses until there was nowhere else that had not been touched by his presence.

It was lazy and sloppy and slow. Will found himself trying to hide a grin as Hannibal watched him, and then found himself wanting to preen instead. He tugged his hair a little and bit his lip, rolling his hips over Hannibal's, squeezing his muscles around him until he groaned and Will smiled wider.

Will brought a hand to his nipple and teased it to a peak, gasping softly as he pinched it and tugged, his free hand dropping to his own cock to stroke himself up as his pleasure built.

"I want you to bite me there," Will told him, gaze hooded and warm as he watched Hannibal and moved his hand to the other little nub to torment it next. "I want you to tell me the dirty things you want to do to me, because I know you've thought about it."

Will pressed a hand to Hannibal's chest as he leaned over him, keeping his lips hovering over Hannibal's as he rocked back onto his cock a little harder.

"This morning, I want to play with that Hannibal," he whispered, catching Hannibal's lower lip between his teeth and tugging.

Hannibal growled against him, reaching up to cup the back of Will's head and drag him into a proper kiss. His hips bucked up sharply, forcing tiny gasps of pleasure from Will.

"I imagine you laid out beneath me like a feast," Hannibal murmured, trailing wet kisses down Will's throat and over his collarbone, "bound spread-eagle for me to worship, until you squirm and sob and beg for relief." His teeth found Will's nipple and tugged. Will shook in his lap and let out a needy cry as Hannibal's free hand came up to pinch and tease the other.

"More," Will demanded, rocking in Hannibal's lap, seeking out pleasure until Hannibal rolled them both over to give it to him properly.

"I would have you everywhere," Hannibal said, his thrusts shoving Will up the bed, "Kept like a prized prince in my bed at home, your mouth fucked so sweetly at my office."

Will keened, throwing his head back as his nails dug red trails down Hannibal's back. Hannibal bit hard against his skin, sharp enough to draw a yelp and a laugh from Will in quick succession.

"I'd crawl under your desk," Will whispered, adding to the fantasy as his eyes closed and he let himself drown in it, in Hannibal. "Work your clothes open, take you into my mouth... but you'd have work to do, doctor, I wouldn't distract you from it, I'd just keep you warm, and hard, and thinking of me for when you're done."

Hannibal caught a hand in Will's hair and Will opened his eyes to look at him, their smiles mirrored in their predatory grace. Will bared his teeth and kissed Hannibal as hard as Hannibal kissed him.

They tussled for a moment, as though in actual struggle over who should dominate the other, until Will wrapped his legs around Hannibal's hips and dropped his arms over his head to hold onto the headboard.

"Would you have me bound in bed?" He asked.

"Yes."

"Helpless and needy and aching for you?"

Hannibal groaned, sucking a bruise to Will's collarbone. "Yes."

Will laughed. “God, I want to feel your hands everywhere. Tugging my hair and soothing it, scratching my skin and tickling it, spanking my ass and spreading it - *oh* -”

He shivered, squirming against Hannibal’s cock as he found Will’s prostate and tormented it in sharp, shallow thrusts over and over.

“Tell me I can’t come until you make me,” Will whispered, almost to himself, eyes glazed and looking just past Hannibal to the ceiling, lost in the pleasure of this make believe for a little while more.

“Don’t,” Hannibal said, “let me own your pleasure. Let me work your body to its limits and then push you past them.”

Will’s eyes fluttered shut, voice pitching high as he was brought closer and closer to the brink.

“One day we’ll figure out how many times you can come.” Hannibal reached up, settling a hand over Will’s wrists, holding him down. “I want to hear you lose your voice from pleased screams. I want to take you to pieces the way you deserve.”

“Please,” Will whispered, rocking against him, “Come inside me, Hannibal, fill me up.” He forgot the condom, put it out of his head in favor of riling Hannibal up further.

“I will,” Hannibal promised, “one day I’ll paint you with me, leave you damp and sore.”

“I want it,” Will gasped, “I want to be so full of you it hurts.”

Hannibal bit down against Will’s jaw, hard enough to feel but not to hurt, but it was so possessive, so absolutely undeniably claiming that Will’s entire body shuddered from it. He unwound his legs from Hannibal’s body, spread himself wider, pressed his toes to the bed.

“I’m close,” he warned, laughing when Hannibal moved to bite his neck instead. “God, Hannibal, please -”

“Not yet.”

“Fuck.” Will arched up, turning his head to nuzzle Hannibal’s hair until he lifted his head and Will could kiss him again. He wanted all of it. All of Hannibal’s promises, all of his threats and pleasures. He wanted to be tamed by him, to be the only one Hannibal came to for this.

Ever.

Always.

“Hannibal, with me, please -” Will held his breath a moment and released it on a moan, tensing and shifting against Hannibal to bring him closer and closer to the edge of his own need. “I want to wake you up with my mouth on your cock. I want to go to parties with you where no one knows who I am. I want you to put me in my place when I get mouthy, I want you, I want -”

Hannibal kissed him and pushed in deep, his orgasm allowing Will to claim his own, both rubbing against each other to make the pleasure last, both lost in the world their fantasies built. When Hannibal pulled back, Will smiled at him, lips red from bites and kisses.

“What were you going to say?” Hannibal asked him, pressing their foreheads together. Will closed his eyes and let his smile widen, so comfortable beneath him, so safe. Perhaps in bed, this close, this quiet, they could keep pretending.

“I want you to tame me,” he replied. “I want to be yours.”

Will swallowed and nuzzled against the doctor, before a laugh pushed past his lips and he shook his head, nervous with how sentimental he had sounded, how close it came to pushing them beyond the fun of playing this way.

“And I want breakfast.”

While Hannibal ordered room service, Will disappeared into the shower and did not emerge for nearly half an hour. Hannibal preferred his own cooking to hotel food, even decent hotel food, but with Will around he’d never gotten to the grocery store, and the suite’s kitchen went unused.

He ordered a bit of everything, uncertain of what Will would be in the mood for, and then doubled several things he remembered Will favoring, until the man on the phone became flustered and asked if he was certain. The food arrived before Will did, and he gasped when he came out to find so many plates arranged on the table.

“Do you have about four other hookers I don’t know about in a closet somewhere?” He asked, rubbing a towel over his damp curls.

Hannibal winced, both from Will’s rough handling of his hair and his casual degradation of himself. “I wanted to treat you.”

“Consider me treated,” Will murmured, reaching for an orange.

“Will. I’d like to talk to you.”

A gentle whistle between his lips and Will concentrated on peeling the fruit in his hands. “Nothing good ever comes from things that start with that.”

Hannibal’s smile was small but genuine, and Will’s shoulders relaxed from their tension somewhat. When Hannibal came around the table to stand nearer, Will lifted his eyes but didn’t meet Hannibal’s, brows up in expectation.

Things have gone too far, Will.

This isn’t what I wanted from the weekend, Will.

I’d like you to leave now, Will.

The entire thing was a joke, Will, you think I’d pay five thousand for the likes of you?

“I would like our weekend to continue.” Hannibal said, and Will blinked, pushing the other unwelcome thoughts from his mind as he oriented himself back to the now. “I would like to see you again. To keep seeing you, after this.”

Will swallowed, the fruit half-peeled in his hands, eyes still not up to Hannibal’s as he felt his cheeks flush. Because he couldn’t look at Hannibal now, he just couldn’t. He’d see the lie there, the laughter, the other shoe that had been dangling over Will’s head finally drop. He made a soft sound of consideration and tried to work his finger beneath the peel again.

Hannibal caught his chin and gently lifted it, making Will finally look at him properly.

And there were no lies there. No laughter. No cruelties.

“I would like... I want to keep you, Will,” Hannibal told him. “In any and every capacity you will let me.”

“You can’t.” Will’s mouth was ahead of his brain, which was still stumbling over *I want to keep you*. “I don’t... I’m a mess, Hannibal. I spend most of my days trawling for johns up and down La Cienega Boulevard. I can barely manage to pay rent and eat in the same week.”

“I can help with that,” Hannibal told him, “It’s not conditional on your answer. Regardless, I’d see you set up a little bit more firmly before I leave. You needn’t worry that a breakup would leave you helpless.”

Will laughed, humorless and scared. This didn’t happen to people. Especially not people like *Will*. “What, you’re offering to be my *sugar daddy*?”

Hannibal knelt down before him, taking both of Will’s hands in his. “I want to take care of you. I want to see you thrive, and to find in you things that fit neatly with myself. I think we could be good together.”

“You’re going away.” Will’s insecurities forged onward, desperately seeking the flaw in the logic that would bring this all down upon his head. “You’re getting on a plane tomorrow.”

“Frequent flyer miles,” Hannibal said with a wry smile, “and a *very* well invested inheritance. We could see each other as often as we liked.”

Will whined, frustrated with himself, with the man in front of him who was offering what Will wanted from him, what he’d secretly been begging for for two days. But it couldn’t happen, it never did, not for Will, not for anybody. He set the orange to the table and moved to kneel with Hannibal, holding their hands together as he frowned at him.

“I’ve run out of excuses.” He declared, pouting, and Hannibal kissed him. “But -” Will set a finger to Hannibal’s lips, holding him at bay just a moment longer while he still had the nerve to. “But it won’t be as an escort. I... I won’t let you pay me for sex. I want to sleep with you. I want what we had this morning, what we talked about. I want -” Will took a deep breath. “I want you to promise me something.”

“Anything.”

“I want you to promise that when you get bored, you’ll tell me and we’ll go our separate ways.”

“I promise that *if* that were ever to happen,” Hannibal countered, “we would sit down and talk about it together.”

Will watched him a moment more before releasing a huff of breath. “Hannibal Lecter, you’re a shithead. I bet I’m the first person to say that to your face but you are.”

Hannibal looked delighted. “Is that a yes?”

“You’re on your damn knees, like you’re asking me to marry you,” Will mumbled, but he couldn’t keep the smile off his face either. “If you want to buy me expensive things I can’t stop you.”

“That’s not an answer.”

“Yes, you impossible man, yes.” Will laughed, shoving playfully at Hannibal before letting himself be drawn into another kiss.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Will knew how to play a role, and he'd learned to play them well. He pushed himself onto his toes, though he was not much smaller than Hannibal, and fluttered his eyelashes. "I'm bored," he whispered, soft and breathy, "can we go home now?"

Hannibal smiled and nuzzled into his temple. "You're only bored because no one else will match wits with you," he said fondly.

Chapter Notes

Mentions of past violence, and a bit of roughness in this that is *not* between Hannibal and Will, and a promised happy ending!

Hannibal's talk was well-attended. Will sat in the front row, close enough to see the absolute calm Hannibal radiated. He did not sweat or shiver like some men might have. He was an entirely different person on stage than he was with Will. Cool, collected, detached. He didn't engage with his audience, though he participated in and encouraged back-and-forth discussion. Instead, he seemed separate from them, as if he'd turned himself off and his body was now moving on its own.

It should have been disconcerting, but Will found a strange pleasure in it. None of these people knew Hannibal, not really. After, when Will stuck close to Hannibal's side and they all fussed at Hannibal like old friends, he could tell that Hannibal cared for none of them. Only for Will, held close with a warm hand on his side.

As the questions grew more tedious, Hannibal grew more tense. Some of these so-called Doctors wouldn't have been able to find their way past the table of contents in a 100 level textbook. Will could have outpaced them with nothing more than his own self-taught knowledge, and he was far from an expert. But he wasn't claiming to be, and these people *were*.

"That's such a bullshit argument."

Will hadn't meant to say it aloud, but it was definitely one way to knock the wind out of someone's sails. The man who had been grandstanding before Hannibal visibly deflated, glowering at Will.

"And you're an expert, are you? Doctor -?"

"Graham," Will replied with a thin smile. "And it's Mister. I don't claim a title I didn't earn."

"Then perhaps, Mr. Graham, keep your layman and baseless statements to yourself and remain what you were brought here to be. Pretty and quiet."

Will felt Hannibal stiffen beside him but he himself laughed. "See, now *that* is the perfect example of individual exclusion. Should have started with that one, and I wouldn't have needed to say anything at all."

"Excuse me?"

"You assume that as a layman I have little to no understanding of social exclusion theory, not taking into account a person's ability to read for pleasure and seek out information for their own betterment." Will shrugged. "Similar to assuming parenting has no social contribution as it makes no money, and generates none. You think that by gathering information on my own I have no knowledge of how to put it together. Silly, really, but understandable. For an academic."

Beside him, Hannibal beamed. The man before them looked like he was going to say something else, glaring at Hannibal now as though to get him to stand up for the power of academic brotherhood.

Hannibal did no such thing. Another perfect example of his theory, but Will didn't push his luck by pointing that out again.

There was very little left to be said after that. The man Will embarrassed, a so-called Dr. Carter, stormed off, and few people seemed to want to test Hannibal's (or rather, Will's) patience any further.

Will knew how to play a role, and he'd learned to play them well. He pushed himself onto his toes, though he was not much smaller than Hannibal, and fluttered his eyelashes. "I'm bored," he whispered, soft and breathy, "can we go home now?"

Hannibal smiled and nuzzled into his temple. "You're only bored because no one else will match wits with you," he said fondly, "Allow me to say my goodbyes."

Will tilted his head, lips grazing gently against Hannibal's jaw. "I'll wait here," he said, indicating the general area of the refreshments the conference had provided for the discussion. The lemonade was tart, but bearable.

Will tucked himself into a corner, nursing his drink and watching Hannibal fondly as he charmed his colleagues. It happened between one sip and the next, too quick for him to avoid. Dr. Carter slipped into his space, too close for breath, barricading Will into the corner.

"I remember you," he hissed into Will's face, "he's got you all dressed up, but a painted whore is still a whore."

"*Excuse me?*" Will spat back.

“Does Dr. Lecter know you pay your rent sucking cock in back alleys?” Dr. Carter’s hand found Will’s stomach, slid down to his belt buckle, “Does he know you rode me like a porn star for 80 fucking dollars?”

Will’s face flushed dark, pulse hammering in his ears for a moment, too loud to hear anything else. It lasted for a second, maybe two, but it felt like forever when Will came back up again.

“We have no secrets,” Will replied icily, keeping his voice down even as he tried to push the man away. The way they were standing, no one could see that Carter was working Will’s belt loose, that he was shoving into Will’s space in a way that was as inappropriate as it was unwelcome. “Get the fuck away from me.”

“You always claimed to be a multitasker,” the other continued, grabbing Will by the shoulder and guiding him to the corridor a few steps away; better hidden from the general room, off to the side. “Lecter’s verbose with his goodbyes, he might be some time, and you were always *so eager* to make an extra few bucks.”

“Don’t touch me,” Will repeated, setting a warning hand to Carter’s wrist as he tried to wriggle his hand into the front of Will’s pants. “We may have had a transactional arrangement once, that’s over now. I’m not here with you. I’d appreciate it if you backed the fuck off.”

“You’d *appreciate* it? Look at that, little slut learned to talk pretty for a change. Do you remember the things you called me? The things I had you begging for?”

Will threw the remainder of his drink into the man’s face and squeezed past him to get to the mouth of the corridor. If he could get to the table, at least, it was well within sight of others, he was certain that the man wouldn’t risk his own reputation just to sully Will’s in public.

Carter yanked him back by the hair, backhanding Will before he could protest. Will’s ears were ringing, his vision blurring for just a moment as Carter shoved him back against the wall, face first.

“You’re a little *bitch*,” he growled, shoving Will’s slacks down, “And that’s all you’ll ever be. You just need to be reminded.”

No. Will was better than that. Even before Hannibal, he knew that. He had no shame in his job, no shame in what he did to keep himself fed and sheltered. And he was not going to let this man tear him apart.

Reaching back, Will clawed blindly at the man’s face, fingers catching against his jaw and tearing.

“Fucking *whore*-”

Will shoved himself away from the wall, turning on Carter with a snarl. Hannibal found them like that, Carter reaching for Will’s throat, cheek bleeding, Will with his slacks around his thighs and rearing back for another strike.

“I would not, if I were you.” Hannibal’s voice was steely, so quiet it was almost hard to hear over the roar of blood in Will’s ears, but he heard, turning his head and immediately ducking to pull his clothes back on in a semblance of order. His first thought was to apologize, then to get angry.

He did neither.

He looked at Carter, breathing heavily, and turned his gaze to the floor.

“You were never good at sharing, Lecter. Not the stage, not the honor roll. Not even the sluts you fucked in college. You can’t be a lone wolf in this industry, Hannibal, knowledge grows through sharing.” Carter spat, bringing a hand to his face and cursing. “Your little toy boy attacked me just now, demanded I fuck him. When I refused on moral grounds he struck me.”

“Now, we all know that isn’t true.”

“Do we?” Carter glared at him. “You believe a street *slut* over an esteemed colleague?”

“Esteemed is quite the embellishment, Dr. Carter, considering your practice has recently been under investigation for fraudulent taxation reports, and has an inquest out for unlawful distribution of client information to third parties.” Hannibal calmly told him, as the other’s eyes widened. “It helps to know the competition, Eric, and I read extensively. Now, if you’d excuse us -”

“I’ll sue him for harassment!”

“By all means,” Hannibal replied, tilting his chin just so to indicate a security camera hidden in a shadowed corner. “Recorded actions, as you know, speak much louder than words to a jury.”

For a moment no one spoke, the silence felt stifling and Will had to hold his breath for fear of shattering whatever bubble Hannibal had built around them. Finally, Dr. Carter stepped away, another pointed curse at Hannibal before he turned to spit at Will’s feet and walked away. By the time Hannibal came nearer, Will was shaking.

“Are you alright?”

“I’m fine,” Will snapped, defensive without meaning to be. His vision tunneled, hands fumbling loudly with the buckle of his belt.

Hannibal’s hands gently cupped his face, his thumbs wiping tears away from Will’s eyes. Will blinked, drawing in a shuddering breath. It hurt to be touched like this, so sweet and careful, like he was something precious.

“I’m sorry,” Will babbled, “I didn’t mean-”

Hannibal kissed his forehead. Will’s body relaxed, relief overtaking him as he let Hannibal pull him close.

“I’m sorry I left you.”

Will shook his head, tucking his face against Hannibal's shoulder. "I can take care of myself," he mumbled into the fabric, "He wouldn't have touched me again. Can we go home now?"

Will's face still stung when they entered the hotel room, and for a moment he felt dazed. It was very, very rare that he had clients become violent with him outside of an agreed scene. It happened, of course it did, but not enough for Will to bounce back from that kind of thing scott free.

He still felt sick, still heard that voice in his head reminding him that as much as he might have no qualms about his work he was a man who sucked cock for money, it was what he did. And people, in Los Angeles especially, would recognize him once in a while. That was just a fact.

A painted whore is still a whore.

Does he know you rode me like a porn star for 80 fucking dollars?

Will swallowed. "He, uh," licking his lips did little to wet them, his entire mouth felt dry. "He bought me, once. I guess he figured I was open for business."

Hannibal moved to stand in front of him again, close enough for Will to lean forward if he wanted. He didn't for the moment, he just kept his eyes down, shame shifting his jaw a little.

"It could happen again," Will said quietly. "I serve people from all walks of life, it's inevitable that I'd meet someone who recognized me."

"No one is deserving of such treatment, Will, regardless of their line of work."

"It's statistically likely that more of your colleagues might have -" Will's breath hitched and he shook his head. "I'm just... I just want to... I don't mind carrying the burden of what I am, Hannibal, I chose to do this. But you don't have to."

"Will."

"I'll make you look bad. People will wonder if you bought me too. It could ruin you."

"It couldn't," Hannibal said simply. Will looked away, teeth digging into his lip.

"The things people say-"

"Have no bearing on my life." Hannibal was firm, uncompromising. His arms were strong when he drew Will in, holding him close. Holding him together. "Will. The money doesn't come from my job, and I don't practice anymore. Even if it did, no one is going to use you to hurt me."

"You should pretend you don't know, at least," Will insisted. He wrapped his arms around Hannibal's waist, holding tight to him.

"I'll do no such thing. We needn't brag about any illegalities, of course, for your safety, but I won't bring you home just to denounce you, Will."

Will hid a watery breath in Hannibal's shirt, eyes squeezed tightly shut. "I've never minded it before," he whispered, "not until there was someone else it could be used against."

"What will hurt me is seeing you hurt," Hannibal told him, stroking Will's hair and kissing the top of his head as he held him. "And if he hurt you, if he managed -"

"A weak backhand, I've been slapped around worse." Will replied, looking up with a sigh when Hannibal held him by the shoulders. "It happened, it doesn't anymore."

"And it won't again. Not while I'm around to stop it."

Will's lips quirked in a shaky smile and he pressed to Hannibal again. "You're a romantic idiot, you know that?"

"Yes." Hannibal replied easily, and Will snorted a laugh, tucking himself into the warm embrace for a moment more. In truth, he wanted to just curl up and sleep. But it was late afternoon, now, and it was Sunday. Regardless of whatever happened later, he wouldn't see Hannibal tomorrow and he wasn't about to waste his time napping when he could take his fill of the man instead.

He wondered morbidly if Hannibal had ever fantasized about using Will in that way, as though they were only client and hooker, as though Will was worth the eighty bucks he asked for his ass. It probably wasn't the best time to bring that up, but Will kept it at the back of his mind, for curiosity's sake.

"What do you want to do right now?" Will asked, pulling back again. "It doesn't have to be with me just... it's late afternoon after you just gave a presentation, you've served enough emotional labor to last you a fortnight. What do you want to do?"

"I'd like to lay down with you," Hannibal said, backing slowly towards the bed. He tugged Will along with him, gentle hands on his wrists. Will went easily, too tired to resist.

"I don't think I'm up for much," Will warned hesitantly. Hannibal pulled him into the bed, rolling them both so Will was on his back, spread out amongst an obscene amount of pillows.

"You needn't do anything at all," Hannibal whispered into Will's chest, slowly working him out of the buttons of his fitted shirt, "Just lay back for me."

Will let out a soft, uncertain laugh. He'd never been a passive lover before. He tended to set the pace, lead whatever interaction he found himself in. He could play-act at submissive if a john wanted him to, but he was still in control.

Hannibal was almost too affectionate for Will to bear, always wanting to taste and touch, to absorb as much of Will as he could. He made Will feel naked before he was even undressed, blushing while still wearing his slacks.

Hannibal slid Will's belt from the loops and leaned up to kiss him, slow, thorough. Will lost himself and didn't come back up until gentle hands wrapped leather around his wrists.

He laughed, ducking his head to see Hannibal gently tightening the loop of his belt around them. Will's cheeks flushed and he let his head fall back to the bed. He thought back to the morning and Hannibal's ardent promises against his sweaty skin and his body trembled in anticipation.

"I promise not to run," Will joked, arching up and getting comfortable as Hannibal guided his arms up over his head and worked the belt through the slats in the headboard to keep Will pinned. It wasn't a heavy knot, Will could probably wriggle free without much effort if he wanted to.

He just didn't want to.

"Perhaps not run," Hannibal agreed, amused, "but I plan to start showing you early on just how worthy of attention and pleasure you are."

Will licked his lips and turned away with a smile. Yeah, that he would have trouble with for some time. There would always be that voice, someone else's, Will's own, at the back of his mind reminding him that this started as a transaction and could end just as easily.

He wouldn't tell Hannibal, it wouldn't matter. But it was a pleasant thought that Hannibal wanted to bind Will down only to kiss and adore him.

And adore he did. Hannibal's mouth was worshipful, leaving spit-slick bruises down his throat, over his collarbone. He trailed heat down Will's stomach, light enough beneath his navel to make him laugh and suck in his stomach.

"I didn't know you were ticklish."

"I'm not," Will said, very, *very* sternly. This was quickly ruined when Hannibal's clever fingers found his sides, too soft and too knowing, slipping into every secret spot that tore laughter from Will's throat.

"I'll kick you!" Will gasped, squirming, "I will, Hannibal, don't you dare!"

"I don't lack for belts," Hannibal murmured into the curve of Will's hip, sliding his pants down in tiny increments.

"You are an awful, awful person," Will told him through his laughter, lifting his hips obediently for Hannibal to pull more clothing off him. And Hannibal was just as worshipful here, too. Kissing Will's thighs, teasing them wider with clever fingers, his breath pleasantly cool over Will's cock where it lay half-hard against his stomach. Hannibal flicked his gaze up to Will's for a moment.

"I suppose I could be worse," he mused, and Will snorted, shaking his head.

"Please don't be worse,"

"I could leave you here, tied down, and do nothing but kiss you everywhere."

"Hannibal, don't -"

“Leave you wanting and needy and lovely. Do you know how lovely you are when you blush, Will?”

“Yes,” Will replied, pointedly unamused, and Hannibal laughed, leaning up to kiss him.

“Should I do more, then?”

“Please.”

“Should I make you come?”

Will moaned, smile spreading wide as he bridged his back to bring his chest closer to Hannibal’s where he held himself over Will.

“Please make me come,” he agreed.

“With my hands?”

“Yes.”

“Or my tongue?”

“Yes, please.”

“Or my cock?”

“Dealer’s choice,” Will laughed helplessly, seeking to kiss Hannibal again. “Just please, *please*, Hannibal, do something soon or I might come from just your words alone.”

“Well, where would the fun be in that?” Hannibal’s words were light across Will’s lips, down his cheek, over his jaw.

Hannibal’s mouth was as clever as his fingers. He spread Will’s thighs until Will ached with it, all leverage lost, nowhere to squirm away to as Hannibal pressed a hot mouth to his entrance.

The noises Will made were indecent, but he had no hope of covering his red face. Hannibal had him kept still for hands to wander, to pinch and pull at his nipples and hold his hips down when he started to buck.

“Hannibal,” Will’s voice broke on an embarrassing whine, and then another. Hannibal never seemed to be done with him, switching from his tongue to his fingers, spreading Will open as he sucked a bruise into his thigh. Will was burning with it, trembling as pleasure built within him.

Hannibal wanted to hold him on this precipice, to keep him on the very edge of pleasure until his voice went hoarse and then vanished entirely. He longed to see Will desperate with need and kept in Hannibal’s bed for hours, until release and sleep both took him.

But neither of them had the patience for that. With great reluctance, Hannibal pulled away, reaching for a condom.

Will dropped his head back against the pillow, lips parted on panting breaths as he trembled and waited for Hannibal to touch him again. He hadn't always had sex for money. It hadn't always been transactional. But even when it hadn't been, it had never been *this*. Sex was fun, it was silly, it was passionate sometimes, but no one had ever worshipped Will like Hannibal seemed to want to.

He just couldn't understand how someone like Hannibal - beautiful, clever, genuine Hannibal - had looked at Will and thought 'yes, I think I'd like to date that'.

But here they were, sharing sloppy kisses as Hannibal teased the head of his cock against Will's hole and nipped his lips when Will whined.

"You're a menace," Will whispered.

"I know," Hannibal kissed him, slowly sinking into the warmth of his body again.

The belt had come undone from the headboard with Will's wriggling, but he kept his arms above his head regardless, enjoying the helplessness when he felt so damn safe. And he did feel safe with Hannibal. Foolish, certainly, having known the man two days, but Will always went with his gut when it came to people.

It hadn't led him astray so far.

"Harder," Will begged, grinning when the thrusts pushed against his hips more insistently, shoving Will up the bed a little more. "God, Hannibal, you're going to drive me insane."

"Likewise," Hannibal told him, pressing a smile to Will's cheek. "So fair's fair."

They made love until Will came, which didn't take particularly long considering Hannibal's deliberate teasing, and Will wrapped his legs around Hannibal to work him to orgasm not long after.

When Hannibal freed his hands, Will draped them over his doctor and nuzzled against his neck with a sigh.

Hannibal tucked them both under clean sheets, Will held tight to his chest. "I have to leave early in the morning," he said regretfully, "you'll likely still be asleep."

Will tensed, and then sighed. There was no more time to put off the conversation, he supposed. "I'll probably wake when you do," he said, "but if I don't, I'll be sure to be out by checkout. 11?"

"Yes," Hannibal said slowly, his voice oddly hesitant. "11 AM. On Friday."

Will pushed back to stare at him. "Hannibal, what did you do?"

“I haven’t seen your apartment, but given the housing situation in LA, I was certain I could find better. I just haven’t had time to look yet. And I won’t leave you floundering until I find something.”

“I’m hardly *floundering*,” Will said. Somehow, he was unable to muster the offense he was sure he should feel. Instead, he felt giddy. His upbringing told him to avoid charity and be wary of gifts, but being doted on by Hannibal only brought a pleased smile to his face.

“The room is booked through until Friday morning,” Hannibal continued, “with breakfast and dinner included, should you wish to call down for it. It is entirely up to you if you stay here or not, I won’t make you.”

I can’t make you .

Will pressed his face to Hannibal’s chest with a sigh, a smile still warming his features as he nuzzled him. He had the option to stay. Hannibal wasn’t making him accountable for the room, or the food, or anything at all. If Will’s pride got the better of him, he could go.

He knew he wouldn’t.

“It’ll give me time to slowly walk my nice things back to my place throughout the week,” Will reasoned, looking up again.

“Or you could take a cab.”

Will snorted. “Too expensive to where I live, not worth it.”

“You have recently come into possession of five thousand dollars,” Hannibal reminded him and Will shook his head.

“I can’t take that.”

“Will.”

“It would feel wrong to just -” he bit his lip. It had started with money, of course, and both knew that. It had been based on Will’s company for a set price. But that felt wrong now, it didn’t feel proper. “I have some savings, I’ll be alright. Rent’s not due for two weeks anyway.”

“And by then you’ll have a new apartment and it will all need to be moved again,” Hannibal told him. “Don’t view it as payment, Will. It isn’t.”

“Then what is it?”

Hannibal hesitated. Will rolled his eyes, knowing exactly where this was going. He’d seen more than one colleague find themselves a steady john. “I fear the word ‘allowance’ would be an affront to you.”

“You’d be right. Try again.”

The problem was, Hannibal was good at just about anything if he *tried*. After a moment's thought, he pulled Will in a little tighter, delivering his next answer directly into Will's curls. "It's me trying to care for you. To have you safe and secure when I can't be here with you. I told you I wanted to keep you, Will, and you told me you'd let me. You have as much of me as you want, Will, so let it extend to this."

Will hummed, tried to be upset about this, failed, and sighed.

"You're going to spoil me," he mumbled.

"Yes, that's the plan."

"*Rotten*," Will added, amused. "I'll grow fat and boring."

"Fat I can live with," Hannibal chuckled, stroking Will's cheek as he pulled back. "And boring is an impossibility with you, Will."

"Are you always like this?"

"Never."

Will laughed, leaning in to kiss him before settling to the pillow so he could still see Hannibal as they lay together. He reached to spread his fingers, palm to palm, with Hannibal's.

"So you're getting me a place to live," he listed, "clothes. A penthouse suite in one of the swankiest hotels in Los Angeles."

"A car," Hannibal added.

"No," Will laughed, shaking his head. "Hannibal no, no one in their right mind drives in Los Angeles. I'd spend more time worrying about where I parked the thing than actually using it. Please." He gave Hannibal a look until the other relented with a sigh.

"A phone," Hannibal continued, pressing his fingers to Will's lips when he tried to argue against that, too. "That works, Will."

"Mine works," Will protested feebly. It did. If you stood very still and tried not to jiggle it too roughly. Hannibal seemed unimpressed.

"It has a *physical keyboard*."

"If you get me a smartphone, Hannibal, I swear to god..."

"A flip phone would hardly be spoiling you." Hannibal's smirk was insufferable. Will smothered him playfully with a pillow to be rid of it.

"I think you've chosen enough gifts for a while."

"Hardly. How else will I keep you thinking of me until I return?"

“I hear they’ve invented telephones you can carry around in your pocket. Without a keyboard, even.”

Will couldn’t hold a straight face when Hannibal raised an eyebrow and so just laughed, helpless to this as he had been to Hannibal’s tongue and fingers, as he had been to everything they’d done together. He kissed him chastely. Then not so chastely. Then pressed himself to the pillow and peeked at the man through his fringe.

“Thank you,” he told him honestly. “I still don’t understand *how* but - thank you. It’s kind. Too kind. Unnecessary, since I’ve tripped hard and fallen harder for you already but... it’s welcome.”

Hannibal just stroked his hair. For a while they lay together quietly, neither feeling the need to interrupt the other’s thoughts, whatever they may be. But finally Will couldn’t hold it anymore, he released a weak little breath and pushed up on his elbows.

“This is going to sound -”

“Tell me.”

Will bit his lip, not looking at Hannibal. “Am I... do you have -”

“No,” Hannibal told him honestly. “I don’t make a habit of picking up strays, Will. But I’ve also learned the importance of making one’s feelings known when opportune moments present themselves.” He reached to gently tuck his knuckles beneath Will’s chin and turn him to meet his eyes. “I never want to make you feel like a thing, Will. Ever. to me you are one of the most fascinating people I’ve ever met, and it is that I wish to covet and spoil, not an idea of you.”

“I’m messy.” Will warned him.

“Good. Tidiness is overrated.”

“I sleep-in in the mornings.”

“Alright.”

“I sing in the shower.”

“Do you?”

Will laughed, nodding helplessly. “I’m terrible.”

“You’ll have to give me a private show, I think.” Hannibal told him, shifting to rest side by side with Will when he settled to the bed again. Will narrowed his eyes, as though considering.

“Backstage passes sell out quick,” he warned. And Hannibal’s smile warmed his very bones.

“I’ll be sure to get in early,” Hannibal replied.

End Notes

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